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NOMA WELCOMES 300,000TH VISITOR IN 2018
Museum Sees All-Time Highest Visitation in City's Tricentennial Year

NEW ORLEANS, LA – On Sunday, December 9, the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) welcomed its 300,000th visitor in 2018. In celebration of a significant year for New Orleans, NOMA set the goal of reaching over 300,000 visitors for the city's 300th birthday.

"I want to honor and thank everyone who has visited NOMA, and as a result, supported this important institution," said Susan Taylor, NOMA's Montine McDaniel Freeman Director. "You are making certain NOMA will remain a critical community asset by presenting exceptional exhibitions and fulfilling the role of cultural convener in our city."

2018 marks the third consecutive year of record-breaking attendance for NOMA. In 2016, the museum topped the 2015 post-Katrina record of 240,000 with almost 260,000 visitors. In 2017, NOMA surpassed the previous year's admission by 12% with 291,000 visitors. Patrons in 2018 hailed from more than 60 countries. NOMA's admission numbers are bolstered by participation in the Arts for All initiative supporting access to the arts, offering free admission every Wednesday to Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

To celebrate New Orleans' Tricentennial year, NOMA added a number of programs to its line-up to attract both new and repeating audiences, including film series, gallery talks with visiting artists, and small talks with docents, curators, and museum staff. In 2018, NOMA organized and presented 18 exhibitions that explored local and global perspectives in historical and contemporary visual art. Notable exhibitions include *A Queen Within: Adorned Archetypes*, which investigated how storytelling and symbols of womanhood captured the imagination of innovative 21st-century fashion designers, and *Changing Course: Reflections on New Orleans Histories*, which brought together a group of seven contemporary art projects that focused on forgotten or marginalized histories in the city.

NOMA's capstone Tricentennial event, *The Orléans Collection*. Currently on view, the exhibition presents selections from the collection of Philippe II, Duke of Orléans (1689-1723). Praised as one of the finest in Paris, the exceptional collection of New Orleans' namesake is comprised some of the preeminent works in the history of art, including paintings by Vasari, Veronese, Poussin, Rubens and Rembrandt. The first time this subject has been undertaken, the exhibition is accompanied by a scholarly catalogue, presenting new research and serving as a lasting resource for scholars and the general public alike.

In 2019, NOMA will celebrate the opening of the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden expansion. The world-renowned Besthoff Sculpture Garden, which opened in 2003, contains 64

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sculptures within its five acres. The expansion, set to open in the spring of 2019, will feature 21st-century sculpture on six acres, sharing significant art and artists with the broadest possible public. The expansion includes an outdoor amphitheatre, bridges and walkways, a sculpture pavilion, and an outdoor learning environment. Additionally, last year, NOMA announced a generous gift from the Zemurray Foundation to support the renovation of the museum's auditorium complex. Planning for the project is underway, with construction anticipated to begin in 2019.

About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 40,000 art objects encompassing 5,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Fridays from 10AM to 9PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10AM to 6PM; Saturdays from 10AM to 5PM and Sundays from 11AM to 5PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1PM every Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by over 60 artists, including several of the 20th century's master sculptors. The Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week: 9AM to 6PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit www.noma.org. Museum admission is free on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission every day through the end of the year, courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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